

Paoli, PA –Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) and Congressman Jim Gerlach (PA-06) presented a \$500,000 check to SEPTA, representing funds that they had secured through the federal appropriations process for the construction of a Paoli Transportation Center. Upon completion, this multi-modal transportation center will connect the bus service in Chester County with local and regional rail destinations such as Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Washington and New York. The presentation ceremony was held at the current R5 Paoli Station at North Valley Road and Lancaster Avenue. —

“The Construction of this facility will be an important transportation enhancement in Chester County, reducing traffic congestion, improving air and noise quality, and, in turn, providing a stimulus to the local economy,” said Congressman Sestak. “This project serves as an example of implementing a responsible inter-modal transportation system.”

“Paoli Station is one of SEPTA’s busiest passenger facilities outside of Center City,” said SEPTA Chief Financial Officer Richard Burn Field. “As travel patterns and rider preferences have changed, the need has grown for a modern station that serves those who live and work in Chester County.”

The entire project will yield a new inter-modal station facility, which includes a bus facility, a 1,200 space parking area, reconfiguration of access roads, new sidewalks, crosswalks, and a concourse linking inbound and outbound station platforms for pedestrian convince.

Congressman Sestak has stressed the need to improve the overall state of the nation’s public transportation. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reported an 85 million rider increase in the first quarter of 2008 when compared to the same time period in 2007, and made clear that we can expect even greater demands to be placed on our mass transit systems if gas prices remain high. The Congressman strongly supported the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (HR 6003), which the House passed, authorizing \$4.2 billion to Amtrak for capital and operating grants to maintain and rehabilitate physical infrastructure and support its employees, and \$2.5 billion in grants for states to pay for the capital costs of facilities and equipment for new or improved intercity passenger rail.

To further enhance transportation infrastructure, the Congressman’s efforts have included helping the House to pass the National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act (HR

3999). The bill strengthens inspection requirements and standards, and authorizes \$1 billion to pay for reconstruction costs in Fiscal Year 2009. One of the many inspection requirements in the bill mandates an immediate update of the National Bridge Inspection Standards by the Federal Highway Administration. In addition, states must inspect all structurally deficient bridges every year and all other bridges every two years. Since more than half of bridges have existed since before 1964, it is increasingly important to have reliable information on the safety of these structures.

“Advancing our public transportation infrastructure is a critical step towards decreasing our oil dependence, preserving our environment, and establishing reasonable fares for local and regional commutes,” said Congressman Sestak. “We must specifically lessen the burden on our airports and our highways by encouraging greater use of railways and busses through projects such as the one in Paoli.”

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of “Deep Blue,” the Navy’s anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the “Global War on Terrorism.” He served as President Clinton’s Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

###